Westwood™ STUDIOS NEWS & NOTES

VOLUME 1 SUMMER 1992 NUMBER 1

WELCOME

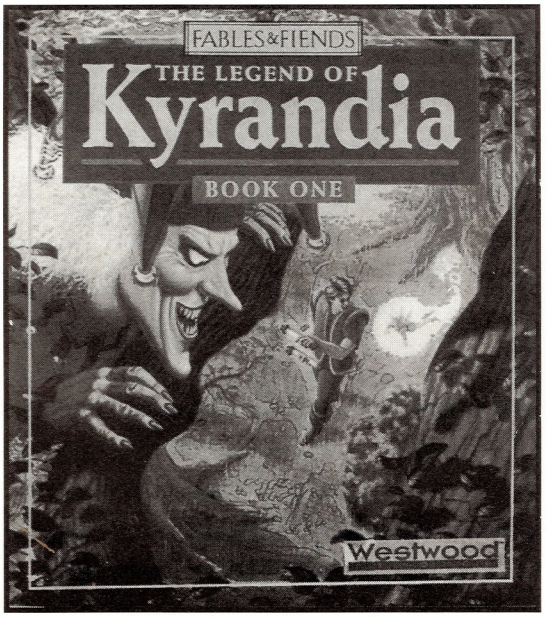
Welcome to the first issue of **News and Notes**, the newest adventure for Westwood Studios. This publication has a dual purpose: to introduce gamers to our development house and to familiarize ourselves with any problems, or suggestions you may have regarding the software we produce.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions regarding any Westwood software send them to:

Westwood Studios News & Notes
3540 W. Sahara Ave., #323
Las Vegas, NV 89102

A LOOK INSIDE

Welcome 1
Joining Virgin Games 1
The Debut of Kyrandia 1
Kamp Kyrandia 2
A Glimpse into the Past 2
A Sneak Peek/Future 3
Louis' Castle 3
From the Mail Bag 4



Westwood Joins Virgin Games®

Westwood Associates, the Las Vegas-based developer of such games as **Battletech™, Eye of the Beholder™** and **The Legend of Kyrandia,** now has the financial clout to do even more ambitious projects. Virgin Games the trans-Atlantic software giant, has acquired Westwood and will manufacture and distribute Westwood's games worldwide.

"Westwood Associates has been very successful as an independent developer, but we wanted to play a more significant role as a multimedia publisher. After working with Virgin Games on several products, we found them to be one of the most flexible and visionary publishers in the industry," said Westwood president Brett Sperry. Virgin Games and Westwood will complement each other quite well.

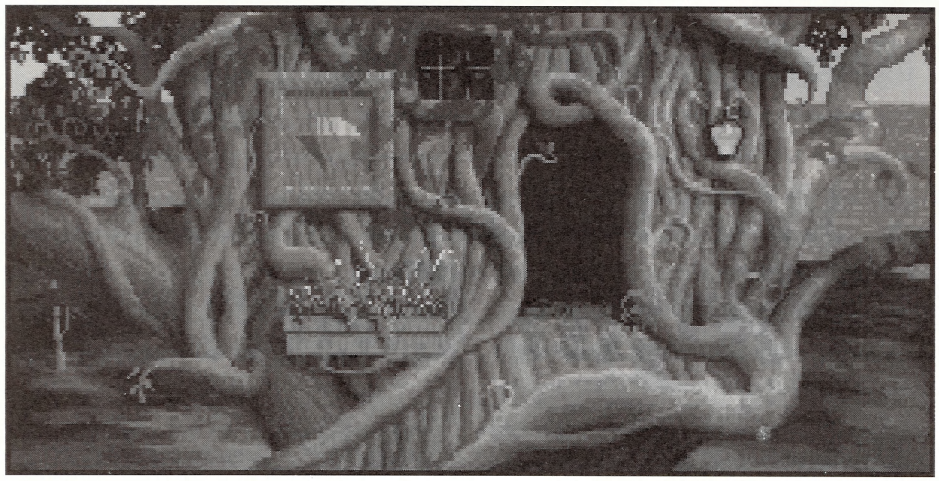
Westwood to Debut Kyrandia™

As we go to press with the first issue of this newsletter, a design team headed by director Brett Sperry and designer/programmer Michael Legg are busily putting the final touches on our most ambitious project to date — **The Legend of Kyrandia.**

This is the first game in the **Fables & Fiends™** series. **Kyrandia** with its streamlined interface, spectacular graphics and realistic animation come together to produce a truly epic adventure. You are cast as Brandon, the rightful prince of Kyrandia, and you must pursue the elusive Malcolm to recover, the source of all magic, the Kyragem. Only then can you reclaim your throne and restore harmony to the Land of Kyrandia.

The intuitive interface lets Brandon use objects and move about through a simple point-and-click system, however, Kyrandia is anything but easy. The puzzles are quite challenging which makes the game both fun and entertaining.

Ramp Kyrandia™



Being on a game design team is sort of like going to summer camp. A strange group of writers, designers, programmers, artists, and musicians, we are all crammed together in our psychological tent. The shared frustration and exultation brings us together with the camaraderie of a pack of hyenas. Each individual is cherished, but all melt daily into the frantic, giggling mass that is the team.

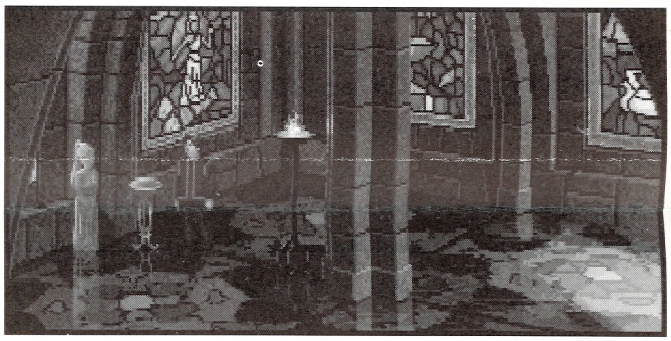
Lead hyenas Brett Sperry and Mike Legg are truly inspirational. Nobody worked harder or laughed louder than these two. Rick "Picasso" Parks is so fast we made him produce four times as much art as appears in the final version.

Every week we would change another scene or three, worry like crazy about getting it done, and then Rick would bail us out. His professionalism actually sort of embarrassed the rest of us.

We all can't wait to go home now, and we're getting a little edgy waiting for the bus. Nostalgia will set in the instant we're away from the curb. It was an important experience, and we will cherish the memories.

- Coco

Scenes from
The Legend of Kyrandia



A GLIMPSE INTO THE PAST

It's possible that our name won't ring a bell with you. That's probably because, as a developer, Westwood's name hasn't appeared in large letters on the game boxes. That will all change as a result of the new Westwood-Virgin partnership, but let's look back and see if you recognize some of our past titles.

Westwood is best known for the adventures and role playing games produced for SSI™, which include **Hillsfar™, DragonStrike™,** and **Eye of the Beholder**.

Hillsfar was our first D&D product full of action and adventure with 5 arcade games, boxing, archery, horseback riding, mazes and lock picking, within the city of Hillsfar. This made the quests more challenging and fun.

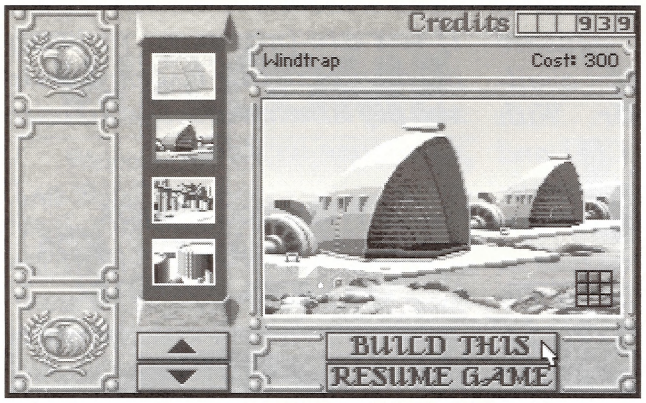
The **Eye of the Beholder** series, also a D&D game, was a big hit and was what critic's called the best role playing game since **Bard's Tale™.** The outstanding art and realistic music made the game come to life with each sound and around every corner.

DragonStrike, another D&D title, is an action flight simulator game that is one of the most unusual and entertaining titles in recent years. There are several flight simulator games out, however, how many let you ride on the back of a dragon? The first-person perspective offers gamers an exhilerating ride as they joust with fellow dragonriders in mid-air.

We'll continue to look at Westwood's past accomplishments in future columns. Stay tuned!

A SNEAK PEEK INTO THE FUTURE

The Next Big Project in the works is **Dune II**. Virgin Games recently released Dune I, the strategy hit based on the movie. **Dune II** more a prequel than a sequel is a strategy simulation game that is shaping up as a real thriller in it's own right. There are no territories or regulations and you must compete against two other houses that have very different personalities and strategies, and only one house can gain control of the planet. Westwood is developing **Dune II** for the CD-ROM and IBM floppy disk. The voice characterizations for the CD version are nearing completion, which means **Dune II** should be available this fall.



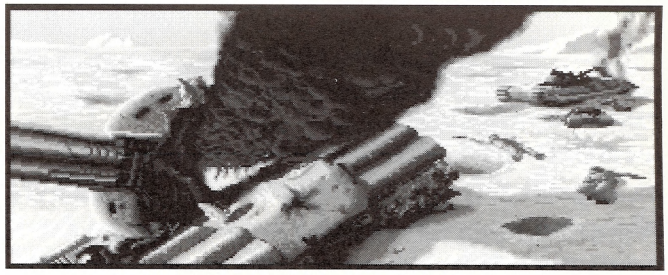
Kyrandia is also slated for the CD-ROM format and we've already begun preparations for **Kyrandia II**!

A new role-playing adventure already in development is **Lands of Lore**, designed by Deke Crum, a game creator we believe you'll be hearing a lot about in future months and programmed by the team that brought you Eye of the Beholder. This game is red hot and scheduled for release in early 1993.

We have several adventures coming soon to video games that we are really excited about. **DragonStrike** is expected to be released this summer for the NES, developed for FCI/Pony Canyon®. In order to accommodate the video game environment, the conversion traded the flight simulator elements for a top-down view of the dragons, creating some great arcade-style action. The next adventure is for the Turbo Grafx-16 system, it's a fantasy role playing game called, **Order of the Griffin**™ by Turbo Technologies™, this game has some great graphics and realistic spell effects. Our next adventure is the first Dungeons & Dragons title to appear on the Genesis™, it's **Warriors of the Eternal Sun**™ by Sega™. This game allows you to see events that take place outside from a top-down perspective while the outstanding indoor action is presented from a first-person point of view. The game offers an automapping feature and 29 musical scores. A hint book will be available separately this fall.

And that concludes our sneaking a peek down the halls of Westwood. See you next time!

Scenes from Dune II



Louis' Castle

As vice-president and co-founder of Westwood Studios, Louis Castle is well renowned for teaching dragons how to fly in DragonStrike, creating dungeons to explore, puzzles to solve, and monsters to fight in Warriors of the Eternal Sun, and for helping to develop three dimensional views and other technology used in nearly every Westwood product. Louis is an accomplished programmer, artist, and designer and with all this experience, we could not think of a better person to ask about the future of electronic entertainment at Westwood.

You just finished with *Warriors*. What is the next project you are working on?

LC: I am now working on an action/adventure game for the SNES™ and an RPG for the IBM PC. The SNES game is going to be a lot of fun and should be on the shelves in early 1993.

What makes this game different than the other games you have designed?

LC: This will be Westwood's first game on the Super Nintendo® and we wanted to make a really big bang. We are using a 16 MBIT cartridge and utilizing the SNES's graphic capabilities to bring a unique look to the game. It is a light-hearted adventure with quick puzzles and lots of action. The whole team has had a great deal of fun on this one.

Is Westwood planning on developing any games for the CD-ROM?

LC: Yes! We are developing several games for CD-ROM right now. We expect CD media will one day be the preferred media on all systems. We are currently working on CD-ROM versions of **Kyrandia** and **Dune II**.

From The Mail Bag

Dear Westwood: I just read that Westwood has been purchased by Virgin Games and I was curious as to why you guys sold the company. It seems that every development house in the game software business is being swallowed up by one of the big publishing houses. What is responsible for this, and what was Westwood's motivation in joining Virgin Games?

- Adam Aiello
Long Island, NY

Dear Adam: You'll find part of the answer to your question on the first page of this newsletter, however, let's address your question in more detail. In the software development business, there are several areas a company can specialize in. Some houses specialize in what is known as "down and dirty" development; which is to say they work quickly and cheaply and as a result the product invariably manifests this shoddy work. Other groups take the middle road, producing generally solid but uninspired software. These companies sink or swim on the dependability of their output as well as deliver the finished game when it's due. At the top of the development totem pole are the quality houses. They get top dollar, sometimes stretch the deadlines, but always produce a superior product.

False modesty aside, Westwood falls into the latter category. It's not always possible to turn out state of the art software without the kind of budget available to a major publisher. With multi-media, CD-ROM, CD-I, and other new platforms ready to revolutionize the entertainment software industry, Westwood was in a rather awkward position. On our own we didn't have the kind of budgets the bigger publishers have, yet we were attempting not only to compete but to surpass them!

After working with Virgin on several projects, it was obvious that their style and ours were extremely compatible. Our specialization in adventures and role playing games compliment Virgin's product line perfectly. Virgin Games and Westwood began to look more and more like a marriage made in software heaven.

Dear Westwood: I just saw the ad for **Kyrandia** in a game magazine and it looks awesome. I was wondering if Westwood will be doing a CD version of it?

- Danny Giglio
Philadelphia, PA

Dear Danny: We will be producing a CD-ROM version of ***Kyrandia*** *and are now in the process of casting voice actors in the various roles. The project is due for release this winter.*

Although we have gotten mail from games for years now, we are delighted to finally have a means to answer them. If you are interested in being on our mailing list or would simply like to correspond with us please write to:

Westwood Studios
3540 W. Sahara Ave., #323
Las Vegas, NV 89102

Printed on Recycled Paper

Westwood Studios
News and Notes

Published by Westwood Studios
3540 W. Sahara Ave., #323
Las Vegas, NV 89102

Editor - Donna Bundy
Designer - Lisa Ballan

News and Notes is published quarterly. Entire contents copyright © 1992 Westwood Studios. All rights reserved. The information contained in **News and Notes** is as accurate as possible. Product release dates, promotional plans, and other details are always subject to change. The information contained herein is provided for the express use of our customers. Reproduction in any form of any material contained herein for use other than previously described is prohibited without the express written consent of the publisher.

BATTLETECH® is a registered trademark of FASA, Eye of the Beholder™ is a trademark of Strategic Simulations, Inc. (SSI) and TSR, Inc., DragonStrike™ is a trademark of SSI and TSR, Hillsfar™ is a trademark of SSI and TSR, Bard's Tale™ is a trademark of Interplay, Warriors of the Eternal Sun™ is a trademark of Sega, Order of the Griffin™ is a trademark of TSR; NES, SNES, and Super Nintendo are registered trademarks of Nintendo of America Inc., Genesis and Sega are registered trademarks of Sega of America, Inc., Turbo Grafx-16 is a registered trademark of Turbo Technologies, Inc., FCI is a registered trademark, Pony Canyon is a registered trademark. All trademarks or registered trademarks are those of the publishers or companies of the products with which the marks are associated.